

Boylston Finance Committee
Meeting with School Committee
February 16, 2022
Via Zoom

Attendees: Eric Brose, Steph Miczek, Howard Drobner, Bob Conry, Adam Wilbur, Carol Costello, Karen McGahie, Lori Hart, Greg Cusimano, Jeff Zanghi, April Steward

Meeting Minutes:

- Reviewing updated presentation from the school committee during the meeting. Jeff to walk through updates/changes
- Enrollment Projections:
 - Actual enrollment is around 1,015 which is lower than projections. BBRSD has 80-100 school choice students district wide each year
 - If the school system grows by 500 students over the next decade, could we handle it?
 - BES could probably handle it, but it would require more teachers which increases the budget.
 - Also need to remember it's not just classroom costs but costs for common spaces as well.
 - As the number of students increase, all of the costs increase, not just facilities.
 - This isn't something we have to worry about now, but may need to deal with in the next few years
- Spending Comparison to nearby districts
 - Berlin/Boylston at the lower end of spending per student according to FY20 data (the most recent available at the time of the meeting)
 - Berlin/Boylston had a modest spending increase last year so the graph is probably still accurate. Shrewsbury spending may increase due to a Prop 2 ½ override
 - Based on information from other districts, we do not want to model after those that spend lower than us. Grafton is the lowest in the state and also recently had an override. Shrewsbury had elementary school classroom sizes in the mid-twenties.
- Changes from prelim budget in December:
 - Made a series of cuts, and they are now at a 5.6% increase for required level service
 - Some revolving funds are being used to offset costs, rather than include them in the budget
 - Revolving funds are somewhat grant based, but not entirely. We shouldn't rely on being able to carry this forward to the same extent as we have before.
 - Updated places where there were estimates with actuals (like with pension costs and charter costs)

- Above level service needs
 - Focus this year and the next few years is on personnel. This is the single most important need in order to provide additional services and support for students, especially in light of the increased needs caused by the pandemic
 - Requests remaining include:
 - Increased hours for speech language pathologist (funded by grants)
 - New floating nurse (funded by grants)
 - Curriculum Assistant (budget request)
 - Elementary grade literacy coach (budget request)
 - Tahanto Counselor (budget request)
- Vocational Students
 - Cost for Assabet Tuition is likely to decline. Assabet is prioritizing member districts, which Boylston is not, so even though 10 applied the budget assumes 3 will be accepted
 - Assabet and other vocational schools are going to an equity based model going forward, which prioritizes member districts
 - Current costs are not just for Assabet, but include other schools like Minute Man and Norfolk Agg
 - Includes placeholder for transportation and tuition with an increase over last year to provide a bit of a safety net
- Vote to adjourn
 - Howard made a motion to approve; Karen seconded. All approved.